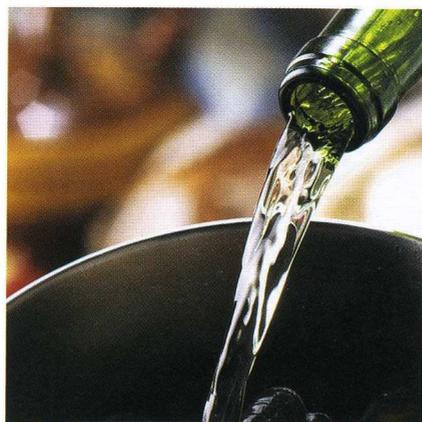


serves 8 | prep 30 minutes | cook 15 minutes

MUSSELS WITH HERB & GARLIC BUTTER



1 lb 12 oz/800 g live mussels
 splash of dry white wine
 1 bay leaf
 6 tbsp butter
 $\frac{5}{8}$ cup fresh white or brown
 bread crumbs
 4 tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley,
 plus extra sprigs to garnish
 2 tbsp snipped fresh chives
 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
 salt and pepper
 lemon wedges, to serve

Preheat the oven to 450°F/230°C. Clean the mussels by scrubbing or scraping the shells and pulling out any beards that are attached to them. Discard any with broken shells and any that refuse to close when tapped. Put the mussels in a colander and rinse well under cold running water.

Put the mussels in a large pan and add the wine and bay leaf. Cook, covered, over high heat, shaking the pan occasionally, for 3–4 minutes, or until the mussels have opened. Discard any mussels that remain closed. Strain the mussels.

Shell the mussels, reserving one half of each shell. Arrange the mussels, in their half shells, in a large, shallow, ovenproof serving dish.

Melt the butter in a small pan and pour into a small bowl. Add the bread crumbs, parsley, chives, garlic, and salt and pepper to taste and mix together well. Leave until the butter has set slightly. Using your fingers or 2 teaspoons, take a large pinch of the butter mixture and use to fill each mussel shell, pressing it down well.

Bake the mussels in the preheated oven for 10 minutes, or until hot. Serve at once, garnished with parsley sprigs, and accompanied by lemon wedges for squeezing over.

